REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending, with claims 1, 8, 15 and 20 being independent. Reconsideration and allowance of the above-referenced application are requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11-17 and 20-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Wyenne et al (U.S. Pat. No. 4,394,655) in view of Stevenson (U.S. Pat. No. 6,456,481). Claims 3, 9, 10, 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Wyenne et al and Stevenson and further in view of Bogascki et al (U.S. Pat. No. 4,135,181). These contentions are respectfully traversed.

A prima facie case of obviousness has not been established for any of the pending claims. With respect to claim 1, the official action asserts that Stevenson provides a motivation to combine "the RFID of Stevenson" with Wyenne et al because, "Stevenson suggest that the electronic devices such as EAS or RFID being used as implanting medical device applications, security system or retail stores to feedback of detected/sensed signals to a central monitor". However, Stevenson is not directed to either EAS (Electronic Article Surveillance) or RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) systems and does not suggest that such may be used in implantable medical device applications.

Stevenson teaches techniques relating to the construction of ceramic capacitors that provide DC (direct current) blocking and EMI (electromagnetic interference) filter functions, which can be used in human implantable applications, such as cardiac pacemakers, defibrillators, or the like. (See Stevenson at col. 1, lines 5-9, col. 2, lines 23-27, and col. 5, lines 32-59.) The only mention of RFID systems in Stevenson is a reference to the problems such systems create

for implantable medical devices: "The use of [...] very high k materials which are optimized for 37 degree C operation[, which is the operating temperature for human implant applications,] will also allow for more capacitance per unit volume. This is particularly important in the next generation implantable EMI feedthrough filters, which must now provide effective attenuation at lower frequencies. This is due to the increasing EMI threat of Electronic Article Surveillance Systems (EAS or retail store security systems), security scanners, [and] Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) systems". (See col. 16, line 61 to col. 17, line 2.)

The fact that RFID systems exist may provide a motivation to build an integrated ceramic feedthrough filter capacitor and DC blocking capacitor in a single monolithic unit, as described in Stevenson. But this does not provide a motivation to combine Stevenson with Wyenne et al, which teaches a bidirectional, interactive fire detection system.

With respect to claims 5, 8, 15 and 20, the official action asserts that Stevenson provides a motivation to combine the "capacitive coupling of Stevenson" with the "conductive coupling of Wyenne et al for reducing and minimizing of EMI and to block of DC signal onto the detected signals in order to prevent of errors and failures of the RFID detecting transponders." However, this suggested combination of Stevenson and Wyenne et al does not teach the claimed features.

Claim 5 recites, "wherein the sensing signals are capacitively-coupled from the RFID sensing transceivers to the first and second conductive paths". Independent claim 8 recites, "one or more RFID sensing transceivers spatially-distributed along the conducting path and capactively-coupled to the first and second conductors". Independent claim 15 recites, "capacitively coupling the sensing signal to a conductor". Independent claim 20 recites,

"conductors located in proximity to the passive RFID transceivers and allowing capacitance coupling between the conductors and the passive RFID transceivers".

The cited features of Stevenson relate to protecting devices from EMI and/or maximizing the shielding between adjacent electrodes. Stevenson is teaching the use of capacitive coupling to reject unwanted power coming into the circuitry through spurious AC (alternating current) signals. In stark contrast, the presently claimed subject matter relates to using capacitive coupling to bring in an AC signal, power up an RFID sensing transceiver and communicate with the RFID sensing transceiver. Thus, one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to combine Stevenson with Wyenne et al, and the proposed combination neither teaches nor suggests the claimed subject matter.

For all of these reasons, it is respectfully suggested that the claim rejections under §103 do not meet the Patent Office's burden of providing a prima facie showing of obviousness, and claims 1, 5, 8, 15 and 20 are patentable over the art of record.

Dependent claims 2-4, 6, 7, 9-14, 16-19 and 21-24 are patentable based on the above arguments and their own merits. For example, with respect to claims 3, 9, 10, 18 and 19, Bogascki et al fails to cure the defects of Stevenson and Wyenne et al, and the identified motivation to combine is insufficient. The only reference to AC in Bogascki et al is the utilization of the power lines 18, which operate at 60 Hz; the lines are used by superimposing the much higher frequency digital signal (data) of interest. (See Bogascki et al at Abstract, Summary and col. 41, line 55 to col. 42, line 18.) The AC signal in Bogascki et al is not used to capacitively couple to the equipment. This AC signal is a power signal on a power line, on top

of which data is superimposed. The suggested combination of Bogascki et al with Stevenson and Wyenne et al is not reasonable in light of the very different natures of the technologies involved, and there would not be a reasonable expectation of success for the proposed combination.

It is respectfully suggested for all of these reasons, that the current rejection is totally overcome; that none of the cited art teaches or suggests the features which are claimed, and therefore that all of these claims are in condition for allowance. A formal notice of allowance is thus respectfully requested.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that issue or comment. Because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper.

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Page : 6 of 6

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No fees are believed due with this response. Please apply any necessary charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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